

[As prepared.]

Mr. Chair, my amendment will ensure that the Food and Drug Administration is adequately funded to protect our nation's food supply, prevent food-borne illnesses from happening, and properly investigate outbreaks when they do occur.

My home state of Minnesota has been impacted by 2 food recalls in the past few weeks, including tainted e. coli hazelnuts and salmonella-infected meat.

The work by professionals at the University of Minnesota, Minnesota Department of Health and other state health departments has played a critical role in diagnosing the cause of these outbreaks that pose a deadly threat to consumers.

Last year, a massive egg recall pulled more than a half a billion eggs from grocery store shelves, thousands of Americans become ill and unfortunately 14 individuals died.

More recently, salmonella-contaminated Jennie-O Turkey burgers sickened a dozen people in Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Washington and Wisconsin.

Just in the past five years, additional outbreaks of contaminated spinach, hot peppers, lettuce and peanut butter have made national headlines.

Now is not the time to be putting our children, seniors, and families in danger with cuts to food safety budgets.

Dramatic cuts to food inspection programs will have severe consequences for our nation's health and our economy.

Cuts mean losing federal inspectors in slaughter and processing plants, which will lead to a decrease in production of safe meat and food-borne illnesses.

It will cause consumers to have a lack of confidence in safe food, hurt producers, and ultimately their town's economy.

After recent problems with tainted peanut butter, spinach, nuts and eggs, Congress gave the FDA new authority and responsibility to monitor food safety and focus on preventing food safety problems in the first place. Why would we go backwards now?

With this budget, a mom and dad will need to think twice before they feeds their child a peanut butter sandwich or make their family scrambled eggs for breakfast. In America, they're not supposed to worry about that.

I ask my colleagues to support my amendment and provide the food safety inspectors the resources needed to fill their mission and improve the safety of America's food supply.